

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Secrets of the Self

AN ENGLISH COMMENTARY

BY

DR. SALEEM A KHANANI

Chapter Four

در بیان اینکه حیات خودی از تخلیق و تولید مقاصد است

زندگانه را بقا از مدعا ست
کاروانش را درا از مدعا ست
زندگی در جستجو پوشیده است
اصل او در رزو پوشیده است
رزو را در دل خود زنده دار
تا نگردد مشت خاک تو مزار
رزو جان جهان رنگ و بوست
فطرت بر شی امین رزو ست
از تمنا رقص دل در سینه با
سینه با از تاب او نینه با
طاقت پرواز بخشد خاک را
خضر باشد موسی ادراک را
دل ز سوز آرزو گیرد حیات
غیر حق میرد چو او گیرد حیات
چون ز تخلیق تمنا باز ماند
شهرش بشکست و از پرواز ماند
آرزو هنگامه آرای خودی
موج بیتابی ز دریای خودی
آرزو صید مقاصد را کمند
دفتر افعال را شیرازه بند
زنده را نفی تمنا مرده کرد
شعله را نقصان سوز افسرده کرد
چیست اصل دیده بیدار ما
بست صورت لذت دیدار ما
کبک پا از شوخی رفتار یافت
بلبل از سعی نوا متعار یافت
نی برون از نیستان آباد شد
نغمه از زندان او آزاد شد
عقل ندرت کوش و گردون تاز چیست

بیچ میدانی که این اعجاز چیست
 زندگی سرمایه دار از آرزوست
 عقل از زائیدگان بطن اوست
 چیست نظم قوم و آئین و رسوم
 چیست راز تازگیهای علوم
 آرزویی کو بزور خود شکست
 سر ز دل بیرون زد و صورت به بست
 دست و دندان و دماغ و چشم و گوش
 فکر و تخیل و شعور و یاد و بوش
 زندگی مرکب چو در جنگاه باخت
 بهر حفظ خویش این آلات ساخت
 آگهی از علم و فن مقصود نیست
 غنچه و گل از چمن مقصود نیست
 علم از سامان حفظ زندگی است
 علم از اسباب تقویم خودی است
 علم و فن از پیش خیزان حیات
 علم و فن از خانه زادان حیات
 ای از راز زندگی بیگانه ، خیز
 از شراب مقصدی مستانه خیز
 مقصد مثل سحر تابنده ئی
 ماسوی را آتش سوزنده ئی
 مقصدی از آسمان بالاتری
 دلربائی دلستانی دلبری
 باطل دیرینه را غارتگری
 فتنه در جیبی سراپا محشری
 ما ز تخلیق مقاصد زنده ایم
 از شعاع آرزو تابنده ایم

Dr. Raymond Nicholson's translation:

*Showing that the life of the Self comes from forming **objectives/ purposes** and bringing them to birth.*

Desire in Islamic literature has negative meaning of Hawa wa Hawas

LIFE is preserved by purpose:
 Because of the goal its caravan-bell tinkles.
 Life is latent in seeking,
 Its origin is hidden in desire.
 Keep desire alive in thy heart,
 Lest thy little dust become a tomb.
 Desire is the soul of this world of hue and scent,

The nature of everything is faithful to desire.
Desire sets the heart dancing in the breast

And by its glow the breast is made bright as a mirror.
It gives to earth the power of soaring,
It is a Khizr to the Moses of perception.
From the flame of desire the heart takes life,
And when it takes life, all dies that is not true.
When it refrains from forming wishes,
Its pinion breaks and it cannot soar.
Desire is an emotion of the Self:
It is a restless wave of the Self's sea.
Desire is a noose for hunting ideals,
A binder of the book of deeds.
Negation of desire is death to the living,
Even as absence of burning extinguishes the flame.
What is the source of our wakeful eye?
Our delight in seeing hath taken visible shape.

The partridge's leg is derived from the elegance of its gait,
The nightingale's beak from its endeavour to sing.
Away from the reed-bed, the reed became happy:
The music was released from its prison.
Why does the mind strive after new discoveries and scale the heavens?
Knowest thou what works this miracle?
'Tis desire that enriches Life,
And the intellect is a child of its womb.
What are social organisation, customs, and laws?
What is the secret of the novelties of science?
A desire which broke through by its own strength
And burst forth from the heart and took shape.

Nose, hand, brain, eye, and ear,
Thought, imagination, feeling, memory, and understanding
All these are weapons devised for self-preservation
By him that rides into the battle of Life.
The object of science and art is not knowledge,
The object of the garden is not the bud and the flower.
Science is an instrument for the preservation of Life,
Science is a means of establishing the Self.
Science and art are servants of Life,
Slaves born and bred in its house.
Rise, O thou who art strange to Life's mystery,
Rise intoxicated with the wine of an ideal!
If thou art an ideal, thou wilt shine as the dawn

And be to all else as a blazing fire.
If thou art an ideal, thou art higher than Heaven
Winning, captivating, enchanting men's hearts;
A destroyer of ancient falsehood,
Fraught with turmoil, an embodiment of the Last Day.
We live by forming ideals,
We glow with the sunbeams of desire!

EXPLANATION:

Mohammad Iqbal believed in the presence of purpose or purposefulness in everything. Art for the sake of art was not good enough for him. Man should have a well-defined purpose in life and then there should be a strong desire to realize that purpose. In the absence of this desire the handful of dust that the human being is loses the warmth of life. Every theory and every ideology that does not focus on purposefulness, and every philosophy that leads to the suppression of desire and creativity is false.

Life can only be sustained through a purpose and the desire to achieve it. It acts as the marching bell for the caravan of life. In the absence of purpose there can be no movement in life and hence life cannot continue. Seeking new paths and new destinations is the aim of life. The struggle to do this is the demand of desire.

The heart beats from the effect of this desire. It is the very soul of this world of colors and fragrance. It is in the very nature of everything. With desire acting as a motivating force, it is possible for human beings to soar into the skies.

Ghulam Ahmed Pervez has explained the second part of the following verse beautifully.

طاقت پرواز بخشد خاک را
خضر باشد موسی ادراک را
It gives to earth the power of soaring,
It is a Khizr to the Moses of perception

Iqbal has tried to explain the connection between human intellect and emotions. The intellect is subservient to emotions. Intellect provides for the realization of the decision made by emotions, and also seeks rational explanation for it. The desire to do something is related to emotions. The intellect then sets into motion as a practical corollary to the objective. Desire guides intellect. If the desire is realistic the intellect will work in the right direction.

The heart awakens as a result of desire and a wakeful heart becomes a beacon of death of everything that is false.

دل ز سوز آرزو گیرد حیات
غیر حق میرد چو او گیرد حیات

From the flame of desire the heart takes life,
And when it takes life, all dies that is not true.

دل بیدار فاروقی دل بیدار کمراری
مس آدم کے حق میں کمیہا ہے دل کی بیداری

Once the desire dies the ability to fly is gone. The life then remains on a physical level only. Its spiritual growth comes to an end at this point.

Iqbal then makes his point through various similes. The desire to see took the shape of eyes.

کبک پا از شوخی رفتار یافت
بلبل از سعی نوا منقار یافت
نی برون از نیستان آباد شد
نغمہ از زندان او آزاد شد

The partridge's leg is derived from the elegance of its gait,
The nightingale's beak from its endeavour to sing.
Away from the reed-bed, the reed became happy:
The music was released from its prison

The life of nations, their laws and customs, their knowledge and wisdom, all are the various aspects of desire that utilized its ability of expression to move out of the world of heart and take a physical shape.

Our physical self, thought process, imagination, consciousness and ability to comprehend the world are mere instruments that life devised in order to sustain itself.

دست و دندان و دماغ و چشم و گوش
فکر و تخیل و شعور و یاد و ہوش
زندگی مرکب چو در جنگاہ باخت
بہر حفظ خویش این آلات ساخت

Thought, imagination, feeling, memory, and understanding
All these are weapons devised for self-preservation

All the inventions that human beings have devised over the centuries, scientific realities or the human thought process all are the means of sustaining and preserving life. If the self-hood is not preserved through these defense mechanisms then there is no purpose attached to these. As mentioned earlier, art merely for the sake of art does not find support in Iqbal's philosophy of life.

بہر حفظ خویش این آلات ساخت
آگہی از علم و فن مقصود نیست

غنچه و گل از چمن مقصود نیست
علم از سامان حفظ زندگی است
علم از اسباب تقویم خودی است
علم و فن از پیش خیزان حیات
علم و فن از خانه زادان حیات

The object of science and art is not knowledge,
The object of the garden is not the bud and the flower.
Science is an instrument for the preservation of Life,
Science is a means of establishing the Self.
Science and art are servants of Life,
Slaves born and bred in its house.

یہ حکمت ملکوتی یہ علم لاهوتی

تری خودی کے نگہاں نہیں تو کچھ بھی نہیں

Iqbal then turns his address to the Muslims of his times. He wants the Muslim to have a purpose in life that is as self-evident as the break of the dawn, and be a blazing fire to all else.

شعلہ بنکر پھونک دے خاشاک غیر اللہ کو

His description of that ideal is vibrant and forceful.

مقصودی از آسمان بالاتری
دلربائی دلستانی دلبری
باطل دیرینہ را غارتگری
فتنہ در جیبی سراپا محشری

If thou art an ideal, thou art higher than Heaven
Winning, captivating, enchanting men's hearts;
A destroyer of ancient falsehood,
Fraught with turmoil, an embodiment of the Last Day.

What exactly is that ideal? Professor Yousuf Saleem Chishti writes:

“ Iqbal’s rhetorical style is worth appreciating. He has defined the ideal but not mentioned it by name since the hidden reference is more emphatic than a clear mention. الکناية ابلغ من التصريح

The readers do not need the poet to mention that the real ideal is ‘God’. It is only the love of God that has the power and the strength to overcome everything other than God. “

The last verse summarizes this chapter.

ما ز تخلق مقاصد زنده ایم
از شعاع آرزو تابنده ایم
We live by forming ideals,
We glow with the sunbeams of desire!

We must engage and remain engaged constantly in purposeful activity. A purpose must always remain in front of us as the ideal of life. Achievement of one goal should lead to the search for the next goal and then the effort to realize it.